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THIRD
ANNUAL
REPORT

NEW JERSEY.
PUBLIC LIBRARY
COMMISSION

1902

TRENTON, N. J.:
THE JOHN L. MURPHY PUBLISHING CO., PRINTERS.
1902.



THIRD REPORT

OF THE

Public Library Commission

OF

NEW JERSEY,

For the Year ending October 31st,

1902.

TRENTON, N. J. :
THE J. L. MURPHY PUBLISHING CO., PRINTERS.
1902.

State Library & Museum, Albany
5/13/33

REPORT.

Hon. Franklin Murphy, Governor of New Jersey:

DEAR SIR—The following report of the work of the New Jersey Public Library Commission during the year ending October 31st, 1902, is respectfully submitted for transmission to the Legislature, in accordance with the provisions of the act of March 20th, 1900:

The Hand-book of New Jersey Libraries, published by the Commission, mention of which was made in our last Annual Report, has been distributed throughout the State, to the members of the Legislature, libraries, persons interested in the library movement and to the State Libraries and Library Commissions of other States. The many applications that have been received for copies of the book, both from within and without the State, have fully justified its publication and given evidence that, incomplete though it was in its presentation of the condition of New Jersey's libraries, it has served a useful purpose. The compiled library laws have proved a great convenience, presenting, as they do, all the legislation that is included in the General Statutes and that which has been passed since, up to 1901.

The fourth section of the act creating the Commission authorizes it to donate to any free public library under municipal control and having less than 5,000 books, upon the application of its board of trustees, a sum not exceeding \$100 for the purchase of books, when the trustees of such library shall have satisfied the Commission that they have set apart from the funds of such free public library an equal sum of money to be spent for the same purpose. The Legislature of 1901 appropriated \$1,000 to be used in this way during the year just ended. Of this amount but \$400 was spent. The four free public libraries aided from this fund are those of Vineland, Belleville, Town of Union and East Newark. Several other applications were received, but as the

libraries are not "free public libraries under municipal control," they do not come within the purview of the act.

The list of "First One Thousand Books for a New Jersey Library," prepared by Dr. Richardson for the Commission, and printed with its last Annual Report, has also justified its publication. It has been found to be very useful, particularly to those in charge of small libraries, to whom the more pretentious bibliographies are inaccessible, and who have no knowledge of many of the books that appear in the Commission's list. Many applications for copies of this catalogue have also been received from libraries in other States.

Of the appropriation of \$300 made for the incidental expenses of the Commission during the year, \$262.57 was expended for printing, \$32.74 for postage, and \$4.69 for express charges.

In the introduction to the list of first books was a suggestion to those in charge of New Jersey libraries that they procure, where possible, copies of State, county and local histories, and "apply to the Commissioners of the State Library for copies of such volumes of the New Jersey Archives as can be furnished." The Public Library Commissioners learn that in response to this recommendation but two applications were made for the Archives, although only twenty-six of the more than one hundred libraries in the State have sets of them. The Commissioners, while fully realizing that most of the librarians are busily engaged in the routine work of their institutions, regret that there should be shown such oversight or neglect.

The New Jersey Archives comprise twenty-two octavo volumes that contain much valuable historical information about the State under its provincial and colonial governments and during the revolutionary period. They are published by the State, under the supervision of a committee from the New Jersey Historical Society. A thousand copies are placed in the custody of the Commissioners of the State Library for distribution. The purpose of their publication is to preserve the early history of New Jersey, and by no better means can this be done than by depositing sets of the printed books in the libraries of the State. The Archives are eagerly sought for by the librarians of other States and by persons who are interested in the early history of America. The first ten volumes are now out of print, but Volume 10 and those succeeding may still be had on application. Volumes 22 and 23

of the first series will be published at the beginning of the year, and others are nearly completed. Some of them contain matter that is not only interesting, but important to persons engaged in historical and genealogical research, and their presence in the local public libraries will be a great convenience. And when they may be had for the asking, it is surprising to learn that they are not already on the shelves of every New Jersey library. Though the early volumes are out of print, they may be obtained from dealers in New Jersey books and pamphlets at comparatively low prices. Now is the time to complete sets, since in a few years the first volumes will be so rare that they will be difficult to secure, if at all. If the Public Library Commission can secure the placing of a set of the Archives in every library in the State, it will have rendered an important service to the public.

Dr. Ernest C. Richardson, the Librarian of Princeton University, and a member of this Commission, has just returned from a visit of a year to the large libraries of Europe. He bore with him a commission from Governor Voorhees, and was requested to investigate the public library movement abroad and make report on the same to the Commission. Dr. Richardson's report is given herewith:

"During my trip abroad I was, in my personal capacity, more interested in collections of manuscripts and reference libraries and archives than in popular libraries. On the other hand, as a member of the New Jersey Library Commission, and equipped with the Governor's authorization to observe and report, I gave a certain amount of attention in passing to the popular library movement.

"It must be said in general that for practical library movements, Europe looks to America for initiative and suggestion, rather than we to them. This is true in the matter of the administration of larger libraries to a considerable degree, but is even more true of popular public library movements. Here in America the public library has come so universally to be looked upon as a matter-of-course part of popular education, that it is now with us only a question of the method by which this instrument can be made most effective for its end. Abroad, however, and on the continent especially, this is not the case. The notion of popular education for every child is itself far less general or

well grounded than with us, and there is very little conception indeed of the American idea of the continuance of the popular education of adults beyond the schools by the use of free public libraries.

"The free city library on the continent of Europe is in general not a library for popular education, but one especially for scholarly use. Jersey City and Newark last year reported circulations of 420,000 and 331,000, respectively, while many of our smaller libraries made a showing nearly as good. The librarian of a library of about the same size as that of Jersey City, in a certain German-speaking city of 120,000 inhabitants, thought that it had a more than fair circulation in distributing 10,000 volumes per year! This is typical of the public library on the continent, although there are partial exceptions to the rule at a few points, where, as at Paris, for example, the use approaches more nearly the American idea. So, too, exception is to be made in the case of Great Britain, where the kind and extent of circulation is more like our own, though, even in England, owing in part to the defective and ambiguous character of its system of elementary education, there is far less practical conception of the part which libraries may play in education than with us, and comparatively little of that energetic search for the best way of utilizing libraries in school and after-school education that is so general here at home.

"It is true, therefore, in general, that Europe is lagging behind America in the matter of practical public libraries for educational use. Without forgetting the above-mentioned exceptions, it is true all over the continent, in France, Germany and Italy, that the type of popular lending library is the subscription library, just as it was with us thirty or forty years ago. The chief objection to this system (and reference is here made to the popular circulating libraries, not the aristocratic Mudie or Book Lovers' Library types) is the fact which has long been recognized by us, that any fee, however small, deters from general popular use. Elementary and general libraries, like elementary schools, must be absolutely free in order to do their full work in the education of a community.

"Another objection to the subscription library, or to any library not subject to public control, is that there is no regulation of the quality of the literature furnished. It is hard to regulate this,

even in a public library, but it is nevertheless true that in the public library, and especially where the public library is directly subject to public control, the tendency is to a better class of literature than will in general be gotten in a privately controlled circulating library. This is true even among us, but it is tenfold more true of the public circulating libraries abroad, which often, especially in France and Italy, cater to the very worst tastes, and, so far from being educating influences, are often actually depraving.

"In view of these circumstances and the general growth of the conception of the use of a library in education, and largely from direct incentive from American example, many efforts are now being made here and there abroad to improve the situation. Here, again, it is unnecessary to speak of the British libraries, whose development follows more nearly along our own lines and where the movement is more nearly one with our own.

"The most general and promising recent movement on the continent, so far as was observed during this trip, related to the installation of public libraries in connection with public schools. This movement has been attended with extraordinary success in Paris, and under the impulse of this success it is being taken up by other cities on the continent, notably by Milan, which dedicated a new library of this sort in connection with one of the public schools while we were there last winter. This is a movement apart from the general public library, of which Milan has in its Brera one of the best examples in all Italy of its kind. This kind, however, as has been said, does not meet the popular educational needs which public libraries in the school building do meet. Without forgetting that this movement is one which has been taken up now anew in New York, and without ignoring the differences, one cannot help feeling that the movement does not differ essentially from the school library movement which has been for many years a feature of New Jersey education. It suggests the possibility of the revival and extension of this movement in America, and also suggests most pertinently the question of the possibility of co-operation and correlation, in this State, of the work of the public library in the public school with the work of the general free public municipal library and its branches. In view of the way the matter is being worked out at the present time at home and abroad, there would seem to be a real field for both, if the

functions of the free municipal library and the free public school public library would be clearly distinguished and the two made to co-operate.

"Another movement, apparently borrowed directly from America, is the 'traveling library,' which has been launched under favorable auspices at Pistoia, in Italy, and is promising to spread considerably.

"Still another movement intended to counteract the debasing influences of the ordinary circulating library in Italy is, although its proportions are not great, not without suggestiveness. This is the Pasolini Library movement. Some five years ago, the Countess Pasolini, the wife of the distinguished historian of that name, and herself a woman of prominence in Roman literary and social circles, founded in honor of her father, Andrea Ponti, a small library for young women at Ravenna. The special characteristic of the library was careful selection and the providing of a sort of readers' guide to the collection, in which the value of each work for the reader's purposes was indicated. This is quite in the spirit of the American notion of aids to readers, but seems to have been undertaken apart from any American influence, and the aid is expressed in a form not common in our libraries, though most practical and useful. It seems certain that such a readers' guide to best books for general reading, comprising a systematic survey for the smaller libraries of the books actually in those libraries, and making an actual appraisal and evaluation of them in the form of a running commentary, would be an extremely practical method for use among our own smaller libraries.

"Following the example of the Countess Pasolini, another library was founded along the same lines at Bergamo a year or two later, and since that time at least two or three others of the same sort have been founded. Now it is reported that the matter has been taken up by the Italian Federation of Women's Clubs and is likely to be considerably developed.

"It is hardly within the province of the Public Library Commission to report on the great Reference or Archival libraries, but I cannot help remarking, having had occasion to make much use of many of the greatest Reference libraries, as well as the great Archives of Genoa, Venice and the Vatican, that the European libraries excel our own in the material for scholarly work, and even, sometimes, in matters of organization for such work. This is

especially true of the Archival libraries, where, in the matter of the preservation and organization for use of the charters and documents relative to the official history of the State, we are, in America, far behind the Europeans. Not that various States have not in late years made great progress in what is known as archival science, but that the European States in general have been working longer and have developed better methods.

"The net result of observation abroad, if put in the form of recommendations as to what might be done to improve the public libraries of the State of New Jersey, might be stated as follows:

"(1) Some plan for co-ordinating the work of the three forms of popular public libraries now existing in New Jersey—the municipal and town libraries, the public school public libraries and the traveling libraries.

"(2) The development of the public reference library of the State and provision for systematic archival work."

The New Jersey Library Association, at its annual meeting in Trenton in October, appointed a committee of three of its members to co-operate with the Public Library Commission in its work for the extension and betterment of the libraries of the State. The association also adopted a resolution setting forth that in the judgment of the association it is to the interest of the public libraries in New Jersey that the traveling libraries of the State should be transferred to the custody of the Public Library Commission.

The members of the Commission desire to state that they have no wish to interfere with the work of any other commission or board, and that the suggestion of a transfer did not emanate from them, but came from those who have been interested in the traveling library movement from its inception. With but little information concerning the operation of the Traveling Libraries or of the results that have been secured, they are not prepared to endorse the sentiment that greater results may be had by a combination of the work; yet if the Commissioners of the State Library will consent to a transfer and the Legislature will authorize it to be made, the Commissioners are willing to assume charge of the Traveling Library system and endeavor to popularize the movement.

During the year the interest in public libraries in New Jersey

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has continued. Several new ones have been opened, others are nearly ready to begin operations, several have been provided for, a number of existing libraries have been improved and Camden voted by a large majority, at the November election, to take advantage of the act of 1884 and make the existing library in fact what it has been in name, a public library.

The experience in New Jersey is that of most of the other States. At the meeting of the American Library Association, at Magnolia, Mass., in June, this interest was manifested by the attendance of 1,018 librarians and persons interested in library work. In this number were twenty-one from New Jersey, including the Chairman and the Secretary of the Public Library Commission. It is exceedingly gratifying to the members of the Commission to learn that our State was so well represented, and when it is remembered that most of our representatives attended at a considerable sacrifice of their time and at their personal expense, the showing is remarkable.

At the Magnolia meeting it was reported that during the eleven months ending with May 31st, 1902, the gifts and bequests to American libraries numbered, in the words of the report, "721, representing a money value of \$11,974,298.54, of which \$2,705,247.91 was for endowments, running expenses, &c., and the remaining \$9,269,050.63 for the erection of library buildings, sites, &c. Of this latter amount, \$7,604,000 was contributed by Andrew Carnegie to 234 libraries, 214 of which are in this country, and to which he has given \$6,359,000. In addition to this sum for the erection of buildings, gifts have been made of 23 buildings and 27 sites upon which no valuation has been placed. To complete this survey, we must also take into account 177,669 volumes and 97,016 pamphlets (some of great value) which have been presented to various institutions throughout the land, as well as gifts of a special character, as works of art, museum specimens, &c." And this report does not include the gifts of less than \$500 in money or less than 250 volumes.

Among the Carnegie libraries reported are those at East Orange, New Brunswick, Perth Amboy and West Hoboken. But these are by no means the only evidences of library growth in New Jersey, or of the fact, now generally conceded, that libraries are a part of the educational system of the State and entitled to the same consideration and provision. The lack of means to pro-

vide a missionary or agent to make personal visits, and the proneness of individuals to neglect to reply to inquiries, prevents the Commission from reporting fully upon the library movement in New Jersey, but it is believed that all of the important changes are given herewith.

Brief mention was made last year of the fact that Atlantic City had accepted the Free Public Library act by a popular vote of 6,062 in favor to 30 against. Mayor Franklin P. Stoy immediately named a board of trustees, which includes Mrs. Allen B. Endicott, who had been greatly interested in the movement to establish the new institution, and who is the first woman appointed as a trustee of a free public library in New Jersey. The trustees have just purchased two lots on Pacific avenue, at a cost of \$23,500, for a site for the new building that is to be erected, and will occupy temporary quarters until the library is ready. The annual appropriation for its support, based on the one-third of a mill tax, is about \$8,000. The library now has 1,500 books in use and \$1,000 is to be spent immediately for new ones. The temporary library building will be occupied on New Year's day.

Camden has too recently accepted the act to permit any progress to be made. The Trustees have not yet been named by the Mayor. It is worth noting that Camden's experience is the same as that of all other New Jersey cities in recent years, and the proposition to establish a free public library under municipal control was adopted by a vote of three to one, although the friends of the movement had some fears that it might be defeated. The existing library has received some support from the city for several years, and the use of the library's rooms was given by the municipality.

East Newark makes a gratifying report on her little library, containing 1,000 volumes, which had a circulation of 1,376 from January 1st to the last of October, while the attendance in the reading-room and library for the same time was 5,721, "mostly young people," the report significantly says. The reference department is much used by the school children and their teachers. Since the library and reading-room are open only from 7:30 to 10 o'clock P. M., and on Sundays from 3 to 6 o'clock, its popularity cannot be questioned.

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The Carnegie Library at East Orange is not quite finished, but may be occupied before this report is printed. Meanwhile the work of organization is being carried on in temporary quarters in the City Hall. When the new building is ready there will be 10,000 volumes to meet the demands of East Orange residents.

East Rutherford's library is conducted by an association, but the public interest that has been shown in it indicates that there would be no difficulty in making it a "free public library under municipal control," though it is now as free as it is possible to make it. It has been open since September 21st, 1901, contains 1,711 books, and the circulation up to November 1st was 5,834. The reading-room was used by 2,393 persons. The circulation of fiction was 5,123. The library is open two hours in the afternoon and two hours in the evening of three days of the week. The association has a membership of 170, and while the library fund is maintained by the receipts from public entertainments there is a balance of about \$800 in the treasury.

Elizabeth is not yet in possession of the public library that Hon. Charles N. Fowler has offered to the city of his adoption. A valuable and spacious site has been purchased for the new building by Mr. Fowler, who has greatly elaborated the plans for the institution. There has been a delay on the part of the city in accepting the proffered gift, as the financial officers must make provision for maintaining the library after it has been built.

In March, 1902, Mr. Andrew Carnegie offered the city of New Brunswick \$50,000 for the erection of a free library building, upon condition that the city would provide a suitable site and would pledge itself, by resolution of Council, to support the library at a cost of not less than \$5,000 per year. The conditions were complied with by the city, and a site on Livingston avenue, between Morris and Welton streets, purchased. An architect was engaged, plans and specifications for the building prepared, bids advertised for and the contracts for the building were awarded on August 18th, 1902. The constructive work was immediately commenced, and the building is now in process of erection. The building will be of brick with Indiana limestone trimmings and Spanish tile roof. There will be a high cellar under the entire building; a basement floor, which will contain offices, storage rooms, reference room, librarian's room

and stack-room. The first floor will be fire-proof throughout and the stack-room will be cut off from the other rooms by rolling steel shutters, and it is expected that the building will be completed and ready for occupancy about June 1st, 1903.

At Passaic, work on the Jane Watson Reid Memorial Library, a gift to the city from Mr. Peter Reid as a memorial to his wife, is well under way. Although the offer was a building to cost about \$50,000, Mr. Reid has taken a personal interest in its erection, and the completed building has cost more than double the sum originally mentioned. It is located in the Dundee or manufacturing section of Passaic, and is to have suitable rooms for the assistance and proper instruction of the young people of that section of the city. It will be open early in 1903. Mr. Reid has recently added \$10,000 to his gift, for the immediate purchase of books.

Hon. Cortlandt Parker, of Newark, has given the old Parker homestead as a site for the new free public library which Andrew Carnegie is to build for Perth Amboy. The only condition attached is that the property shall always be used for the purposes of the library.

The great fire at Paterson on the 9th of February last destroyed the free public library building and the 40,000 volumes that were on the shelves at the time. The building had been a gift to the city by Mrs. Mary E. Ryle as a memorial to her father, the late Charles Danforth. It and its contents were fully insured, and the amount has been paid. Within a few weeks after the fire Mrs. Ryle notified the Trustees that she would contribute \$100,000 to the erection of a new building. A plot of ground 145 by 200 feet has been purchased on a prominent thoroughfare, and competitive plans for the new building have been procured. Brite & Bacon, of New York, have been selected as architects and the work will be begun on the library in the early spring. A few days after the fire a temporary building was secured, which in March was opened as a reading-room. The purchase of books was begun at once, and on June 15th 5,000 volumes had been catalogued and placed on the shelves, and the circulation was resumed. At this time there are a little more than 10,000 volumes in use, including 3,000 that were in circulation at the time of the fire and have since been returned.

About April 1st the Somerville Public Library moved into its new building, which was built at a cost of \$8,500. A considerable sum has been spent for books during the year and the library now contains more than 5,000 volumes. The new building has been handsomely fitted up, has new steel book-stacks, and a reading and committee rooms are provided.

On June 9th the Trenton Free Public Library was dedicated, with appropriate exercises, and opened to the use of the people. For two years previous to this date the circulation of the library's books had not been permitted, on account of lack of facilities in its temporary quarters and the confusion that would have resulted while the work of reorganization, purchasing, classification and cataloguing were going on. The number of readers' cards issued in the five months since the reopening is about 7,000, and the collection of books is about 25,000. The Trustees have arranged for a course of free public lectures in the lecture hall of the library during the present fall and winter. These are to be paid for by popular subscription. The reference, children's and public reading-rooms are very popular, and a large percentage of the visitors is made up of the pupils and teachers from the city and State schools.

Vineland's experience with her free public library has been so successful that the report made to the Commission by Librarian D. O. Kellogg is given in full, in order to show what a township and borough of less than 10,000 population may accomplish:

"The Vineland Free Library has a little to say that might be of general interest, and an encouragement to like work in other quarters. On the 30th of September last the first year of its history closed. During that year it was operated as the joint work of the borough and the enveloping township of Landis, with a combined population of 9,800. From the State it received \$100, from the borough \$427, from the township \$250; a total of \$777 derived from taxation in some form. It received from private donors since the project was first started \$2,100, and from the fines of delinquent borrowers \$80, and from others 1,950 bound volumes. Of these gifts about \$1,400 and 1,000 volumes constituted the possession of the library when it became an incorporated free library. With about \$3,000 then during its history, the library acquired by purchase some 2,700

volumes, equipped its room with shelving and furniture, catalogued its books on the Dewey plan, and paid all the expenses of its service. The borough furnished a cheerful room in the City Hall, which it warmed and lighted. During the year 1,400 applicants took out borrowers' cards, and this means a ratio of every seventh person in the entire population of borough and township; the total number of loans for the year were 21,612, or about one in every three minutes of the hours during which the library was accessible to the public. It also took twenty-eight different periodicals, but of the circulation of these no record was kept, as they were intended at first for the use of readers frequenting the room and not for loaning. Now, however, loans of periodicals are recorded.

"At first the library was opened three afternoons and two evenings of each week, but in a few weeks it was found necessary to open it every afternoon for three hours each, and two evenings for two hours each. About one-fourth of the borrowers are children from the schools, though there is a school library of nearly 3,000 volumes in the neighboring High School building. Indeed, Vineland has heretofore been rather conspicuous for the number of its private subscription libraries that have failed and for its book clubs. But the interest in the library and its utility seem to have increased so far rather than abated. Saturday is the great borrowing day, when an average of 200 loans a day is made. The radius of area reached by the circulation is four miles. The pressure of demand is, as usual, for fiction and juveniles, which books constitute half the collection, but there is encouraging frequency of more serious reading."

West Hoboken is to have a new free public library, the gift of Mr. Carnegie, to cost \$25,000. The Trustees are now in possession of a site, purchased under authority of Chapter 230 of the laws of 1902. Mr. Carnegie's only conditions were that the city should provide a suitable site and agree to raise annually for the support of the library a sum equal to 10 per cent. of the cost of the building.

Fanwood, at the last election, voted in favor of a free public library under the act of April 2d, 1890, and a board of trustees has been appointed. A library of about five hundred volumes

has been organized and arrangements made for the addition of two or three hundred more.

Belleville, in March, 1901, voted to establish a free public library, which was opened in the following December. Nearly the whole of the first appropriation was spent for books, of which there are now about 900 in the library. About \$1,400 has been spent up to December 1st. A communication from the President of the Trustees says that "from the opening day the wisdom of the establishment of the library has been proven. Our circulation averages 1,500 per month, and there is an average of 400 visitors to the reading-room monthly. Our taxpayers are more than satisfied and the library is increasing in popularity daily. We cannot urge too strongly upon our sister towns of the State the establishment of free public libraries."

The Free Public Library of Jersey City, the pioneer among libraries of this State in the field of free lectures for the people, has arranged for a course of fifty during the present fall and winter. These are all on popular subjects, are given by well-known writers and speakers, and to add to their interest are illustrated by stereopticon views. They are given in the lecture hall of the library and are absolutely free to the public, no ticket of admission being required. These lectures have proved exceedingly popular, taxing to the utmost the capacity of the hall. Some of the subjects of the present course are: "The West Indies and the Tragedy of Pelee," "Hawaii—Our Pacific Paradise," "London and its Environs," "China and the Chinese," "America in the Philippines," "The Cliff-Dwellers of the Southwest," "Birds and Bird Life," "Rhineland and Its Romance," "Photography Up-to-Date," "Our Inland Seas," "Spanish America—Its History, Commerce and Scenery," "The Mediterranean in History and Romance," "Evangeline—The Land and the Story," "Arizona—The Cradle and Wonderland of the New World." As a resultant of these lectures, the library notes a marked increase in the use for home reading of works bearing upon the respective subjects presented.

The Newark Free Public Library has during the past year secured as librarian Mr. John Cotton Dana, whose successful administration of the public libraries of Denver, Col., and Springfield, Mass., is as well known as is his reputation as an author

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